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ABSTRACT

This bulletin briefly presents statistics on trends from 1977 through 1991 in attainment of bachelor's degrees and high school diplomas by Whites, Blacks, Hispanic Americans and males and females. Data sources include: a national survey of degrees conferred, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System and U.S. census data. Highlights of the findings include: (1) compared to 1981 the number of bachelor's degrees earned in 1991 was up for men and women in all racial/ethnic groups except for black men; (2) the increase in number of degrees was greater for women than for men; (3) between 1981 and 1991, the percentage gains in bachelor's degrees made by Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian men and women exceeded those made by whites of the same sex; (4) the number of bachelor's degrees earned by Hispanic men and women have risen sharply since 1981, a 50 and 86 percent increase, respectively; (5) black women earn substantially more bachelor's degrees than black men; and (6) following a decline, the number of bachelor's degrees earned by black men increased in 1990 and 1991, approaching the level attained a decade earlier. (JB)

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ED 377 779

INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

December 1994

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Degree attainment, by race/ethnicity and sex

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

December 1994

Degree attainment, by race/ethnicity and sex

The ability of colleges and universities to attract and graduate minority students is important to the goal of equal opportunity. Changes in the number of degrees earned by minorities of both sexes, particularly in relation to the number earned by whites, provide a measure of higher education's progress toward this goal.

- **Compared to 1981 levels, the number of bachelor's degrees earned in 1991 was up for men and women in all racial/ethnic groups except for black men. The increase was greater for women than for men in each racial/ethnic group.**
- **Between 1981 and 1991, the percentage gains in bachelor's degrees made by Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian men and women exceeded those made by whites of the same sex.**
- **he number of bachelor's degrees earned by Hispanic men and women have risen sharply since 1981, a 50 and 86 percent increase, respectively.**
- **Black women earn substantially more bachelor's degrees than black men. The difference between the number of degrees earned by black men and women doubled between 1977 and 1991.**
- **Following a period of decline, the number of bachelor's degrees earned by black men increased in 1990 and 1991, approaching the level attained a decade earlier.**

Index of the number of bachelor's degrees conferred and the number of high school graduates (1981=100), by race/ethnicity and sex: Selected academic years ending 1977–91

Academic year ending	White			Black			Hispanic		
	Bachelor's degrees			Bachelor's degrees			Bachelor's degrees		
	Men	Women	High school graduates*	Men	Women	High school graduates*	Men	Women	High school graduates*
1977	107.9	92.1	102.8	102.6	92.6	88.8	95.4	76.4	98.4
1979	103.0	95.8	103.7	100.6	98.4	93.7	96.4	87.8	93.5
1981	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1985	99.7	105.0	87.5	93.9	95.3	105.8	114.7	122.2	110.6
1987	100.1	108.5	82.5	91.8	94.2	100.9	119.0	128.2	116.5
1989	100.2	112.8	76.1	91.2	98.7	96.3	129.0	144.8	104.1
1990	101.8	117.4	72.3	94.9	104.5	90.0	138.2	162.4	98.6
1991	102.3	121.8	70.1	99.2	113.4	92.0	149.5	185.6	105.1

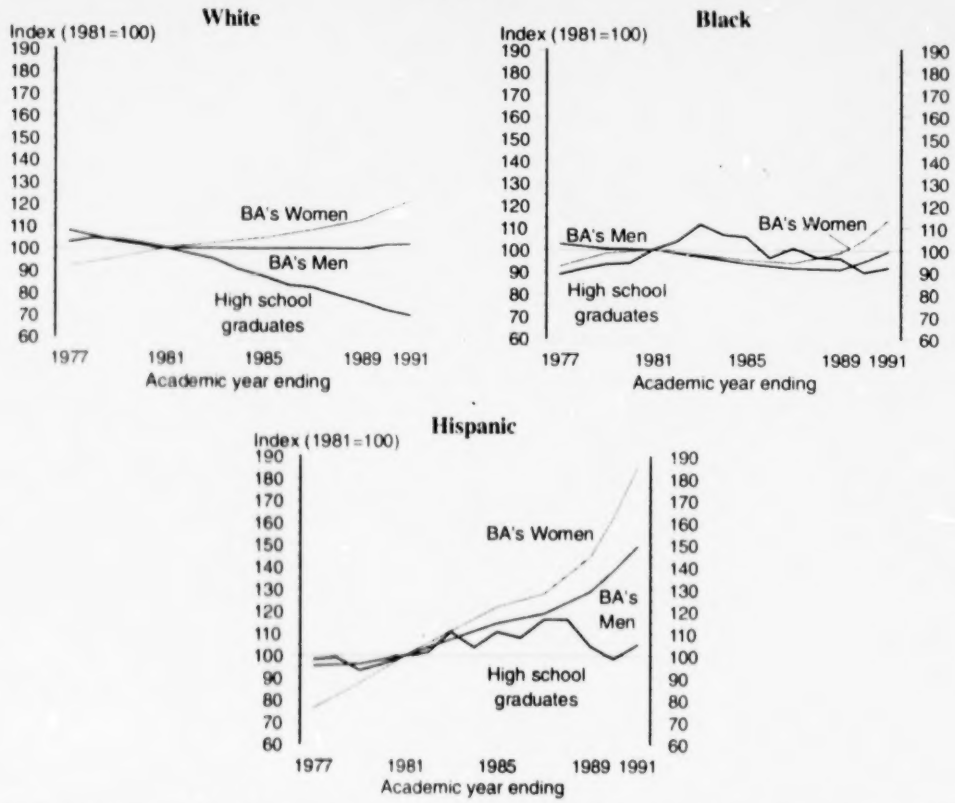
*High school graduates are those who completed 4 years of high school and include those who received either a diploma or a GED credential. The index of high school graduates is based on a 3-year moving average of the number of graduates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS/HEGIS surveys of degrees conferred. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

U.S. Department of Education **Office of Educational Research and Improvement**

NCES 95–712

Index of the number of bachelor's degrees conferred and the number of high school graduates (1981=100), by race/ethnicity and sex: Selected academic years ending 1977–91



NOTE: High school graduates are plotted annually and degrees are plotted for 1977, 1979, 1981, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1990, and 1991. High school graduates are those who completed 4 years of high school and include those who received either a diploma or a GED credential. The index of high school graduates is based on a 3-year moving average of the number of graduates.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS/HEGIS surveys of degrees conferred U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

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